

Message Text

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ORIGIN SCS-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AS-01 /017 R

66011

DRAFTED BY: SCA:SCS:EMARNOLD

APPROVED BY: SCA:SCS:AFFOWLER

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

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FOLLOWING REPEAT DHAHRAN 0009 ACTION SECSTATE INFO

BEIRUT ABU DHABI KUWAIT JIDDA DIA DTD 05 JAN

QTE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE DHAHRAN 0009

DEPARTMENT: PASS COPY TO CHIEF, INVESTIGATION DIVISION, NATIONAL
TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, SA

SUBJECT: CRASH OF MEA AIRLINER IN SAUDI ARABIA

REF: JIDDA 0012

1. NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD INVESTIGATORS KAPUSTIN AND VICTORIAN ARRIVED DHAHRAN JANUARY 3. DURING STOPOVER IN JIDDA, TWO MEN WERE ASKED TO STAY EXTRA DAY TO MEET WITH SHEIKH ABDULLAH MAHDI, SAG DIRECTOR OF CIVIL AVIATION. MEETING ENTIRELY CORDIAL AND CHARACTERISTIC OF WARM AND FRIENDLY TREATMENT THEY HAVE RECEIVED THUS FAR IN KINGDOM. KAPUSTIN NOTES, HOWEVER, THAT HE AND VICTORIAN "TREADING LIGHTLY".

2. KAPUSTIN SPENT ALL OF JANUARY 4 AT CRASH SITE. HE

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DESCRIBES LOCATION OF CRASH TO BE NEAR TAPLINE ROAD AND ON 320

DEGREE HEADING FEW MILES FROM QAISUMA. SECURITY AT SITE DESCRIBED AS VERY TIGHT. LEBANESE AND MEA OFFICIALS HAVE ARRIVED AND JOINED INVESTIGATION PARTY. CONGENOFF MET BOEING REP PIPER, WHO ARRIVED FROM LONDON VERY LATE EVENING JANUARY 4. LATER, PIPER BRIEFED BY KAPUSTIN AT LATTER'S HOTEL.

3. UNDERSTAND WRECKAGE SCATTERED OVER 3 TO 6 MILE AREA. KAPUSTIN STATES THAT NATURE OF AIRCRAFT BREAKUP AND TERRAIN SITUATION SUGGESTS IT WILL REQUIRE LENGTHY PERIOD OF TIME TO DETERMINE REASON FOR BREAKUP. HE ADDED "PRESUMABLY AT FL 370". HE WAS SHOWN CONTENTS OF REFTEL AND HAD NOTHING MORE TO ADD. KAPUSTIN, VICTORIAN, AND PIPER LEFT MORNING JANUARY 5 FOR CRASH SITE AND WILL BASE THEIR INVESTIGATION OPERATIONS FOR A LEAST NEXT TWO DAYS OUT OF ARABIAN AMERICAN OIL COMPANY TAPLINE CAMP AT QAISUMA. CONGEN HAS MADE ITS COMMUNICATION FACILITIES AVAILABLE KAPUSTIN TO USE AS REQUIRED.

4. KAPUSTIN ALSO REPORTS MEA HAS INSTITUTED BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION ON ALL PASSENGERS ABOARD ILL-FATED FLIGHT. SAG HAS RELEASED BODIES OF CREW AND FEW OF PASSENGERS FOR AIR LIFTING OUT OF DHAHRAN. KAPUSTIN, WHO EXAMINED MOST OF PASSPORTS OF PASSENGERS ON AIRCRAFT, SATISFIED NO AMERICANS WERE ON BOARD. BUSHNELL UNQTE KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AIRCRAFT ACCIDENTS, INVESTIGATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE001820
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: SCA:SCS:EMARNOLD
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760003-0237
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760185/aaaacybv.tel
Line Count: 84
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN SCS
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 JIDDA 12
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <16 APR 2004 by SmithRJ>; APPROVED <20 APR 2004 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CRASH OF MEA AIRLINER IN SAUDI ARABIA
TAGS: EAIR, SA, MIDDLE EAST AIRLINES
To: PARIS
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006